

# Decisions of the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee

11 March 2019

Members Present:-

Councillor Peter Zinkin (Chairman)  
Councillor Anthony Finn (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Kathy Levine  
Councillor John Marshall  
Councillor Arjun Mitra

Councillor Alex Prager  
Councillor Barry Rawlings

Also in attendance

Councillor Julian Teare (Substitute)

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Thomas Smith

## 1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Peter Zinkin welcomed all attendees and opened the meeting.

The Committee agreed that where practicable any information in response to agreed Actions be tabled and appended to the Minutes, except where information is confidential or exempt. (**Action:** Governance)

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting of the Financial Performance and Contracts Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

## 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Councillor Thomas Smith who was substituted by Councillor Julian Teare.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

The following declaration was made:

| Councillor    | Agenda Item(s) | Declaration  |
|---------------|----------------|--|
| John Marshall | 7, 11          | Non-pecuniary interest by virtue of being a Council appointed Director of Re |

**4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)**

None.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)**

The Responses to the Public Questions were published prior to the meeting and tabled.

The Chairman invited Mr John Dix who joined the meeting and made a Public Comment which was noted.

The Committee received a number of supplementary questions from Mr Dix which were responded to verbally by Officers and the Chairman.

**6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)**

There were none.

**7. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER REPORT PERIOD 9/QUARTER 3**

The Chairman introduced the CFO Report which was presented by the Chief Finance Officer.

Officers summarised and highlighted the key points under each section of the report.

In response to the Committee's request at the previous meeting, Officers informed Members about the level of debt and debtors.

The Committee heard about the work of the Corporate Debt Board which meets on a bi-monthly basis to encourage Budget Holders to ensure that debts to the Council are paid on a timely basis.

Since December 2018, there has been strong improvement in respect of outstanding debt. Officers also noted that meetings have taken place with Barnet CCG Finance and that discussions are progressing.

It was agreed that the Top 10 Debtors Table be retained within future CFO reports under the Debtors section. (**Action:** CFO Report)

It was noted that in relation to the forecasted budget, there has been a favourable monthly movement of £0.623m due to increased housing benefit overpayment recovery.

Following a query from the Committee, Officers noted that this can be apportioned to late reporting of change of circumstances in housing benefit applications.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED:**

- 1. The Committee noted the 2018/19 revenue forecast outturn, as detailed in Table 1 and in Appendix A.**

2. **The Committee noted the savings anticipated to be delivered in 2018/19, as detailed in Table 6.**
3. **The Committee noted the level of reserves and balances as detailed in Tables 10 and 11.**
4. **The Committee noted the 2018/19 capital forecast outturn, as detailed in Table 7 and in Appendix B.**
5. **The Committee noted the treasury position outlined in section 4.**
6. **The Committee noted the debtors position outlined in section 5.**

## **8. TEMPORARY WORKERS CONTRACT IMPLEMENTATION**

Upon invitation of the Chairman, Natasha Edmunds the Strategic HR Lead joined the meeting and presented the report.

As part of the mobilisation of the contract with Matrix, Ms Edmunds spoke about the associated measures to attract the best candidates. She explained the process to convert temporary workers to permanent staff and increase clarity around responsibilities.

Following a comment from the Committee about Temporary Worker Expenditure. Officers noted that the expenditure was stable for October and November with an increase in December 2018 and a reduction for January 2019. The increase was explained by seasonal demand, the new portal as well as implementation issues around the new waste collection service.

The Committee agreed that the next report on Temporary Worker Expenditure should include comparable data for the current and previous year.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED:**

**That the Committee noted the actions being taken by officers to implement and monitor the new contract for the council's temporary workforce.**

## **9. IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICES - WEBSITE PROGRESS REPORT**

Following introduction of the report, the Chairman invited Barry May, Head of Customer Strategy and Programmes who presented the report.

Mr May informed the Committee about the feedback received on the new website which was largely positive. He also noted that reported issues are currently being worked on to continue to improve its operation.

Following a comment from the Committee about adaptability, it was noted that the new website is easier to change and provides more flexibility for users to adopt changes.

The Committee noted that further work will take place this year to enhance the accessibility to the new website on mobile technology devices.

In response to a query about the search functionality, the Committee heard that the search function has been modified to imbed wider search results and that in the future Officers will consider options to enhance search results further.

The Chairman thanked Officers on behalf of the Committee for their efforts towards improving the website.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**:

**That the Committee noted the actions being taken by officers to improve web satisfaction and performance and the progress made to improve the council's website.**

## **10. HIGHWAYS RECRUITMENT AND RESOURCING**

The Chairman introduced the report which was presented by Mr Alun Parfitt, Operations Director at Re.

Mr Parfitt spoke about the test phase for reporting issues and the development of the system including the option for residents to report issues by sending a photo through the system.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee:

- 1. Noted the measures implemented to address the resourcing issues in Highways.**
- 2. Noted the level of progress to date and the ongoing work to address the recruitment shortfalls.**

## **11. QUARTER 3 2018/19 CONTRACTS PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Chairman introduced the Contracts Performance Report for Q3 which was presented by Officers.

The Committee received an update on the transition planning for insourcing of the Finance Team. It was noted that a range of activities to improve financial management skills of staff in the organisation are underway. An update will be provided as part of the next report to the Committee.

The Committee raised concerns around the issue of Data Quality of Pensions Data and heard about the improvement plan to rectify issues. In respect of the improvement plan for Pensions, it was agreed that an update be provided following feedback from the Actuary on data quality improvement to Members of the Financial Performance & Contracts Committee, Pension Fund Committee and Local Pension Board. (**Action: Pension**)

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that:

**The Committee reviewed the Quarter 3 (Q3) 2018/19 performance in relation to back office functions delivered by the Customer and Support Group (CSG) and Planning delivered by Regional Enterprise (Re) and noted any recommendations**

**to Policy and Resources Committee or Theme Committees on issues arising from this review.**

**12. COLINDALE OFFICE MOVE - UPDATE**

The Chief Executive for LBB, John Hooton and Head of Estates, Chris Smith joined the meeting and provided an update on the Colindale Office Move.

It was noted that both the internal and external parts of the Building was due for completion in the coming period. Over the periods May-September this year most service areas will be expected to move across to the new Offices in Colindale. The Committee heard about the parking options in the vicinity of the Office and for mobile working as well as training and development for staff towards flexible remote working.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED:**

- 1. That the Committee noted the progress towards the transition to the new council office in Colindale.**
- 2. That the Committee noted the current contractual position with the council's main construction partner delivering the new offices in Colindale**

**13. COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted the standing item on the Agenda which lists the items on the Committee's Forward Work Programme for 2019.

**RESOLVED that the Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for 2019.**

**14. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

None.

**15. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved a motion, which was seconded and approved, to exclude the Press and Public on the basis that the exempt item will involve discussion of confidential information. Members of the press and public vacated the room and the public gallery was cleared.

**16. EXEMPT - COLINDALE OFFICE MOVE UPDATE**

The Committee noted the exempt information.

**17. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

None.

The meeting finished at 9.45 pm